Assembly Resolution No. 424

BY: M. of A. Solages

MEMORIALIZING Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim May 7-13, 2023, as Fibromyalgia Awareness Week in the State of New York

WHEREAS, An estimated 10-12 million people in the United States, and an estimated 3-6 percent of the world's population, have been diagnosed with Fibromyalgia, an illness for which there is yet no known cause or cure; and

WHEREAS, A chronic syndrome that is increasing at alarming rates, Fibromyalgia causes debilitating widespread pain and fatigue, has demonstrated a genetic component, and occurs in women, men, and children of all ages and ethnicities; and

WHEREAS, Patients with Fibromyalgia often have to live with widespread pain throughout their bodies, extreme fatigue, sleep disorders, digestive difficulties, stiffness and weakness, migraine headaches, numbness and tingling, and impairment of memory and concentration; and

WHEREAS, The average gap between medical research and clinical practice is 17 years; and

WHEREAS, It often takes an average of five years to receive a diagnosis of Fibromyalgia; and

WHEREAS, There is currently no database that maintains accurate information regarding the prevalence of Fibromyalgia in New York State, or the United States; and

WHEREAS, Many physicians refuse to treat Fibromyalgia patients whose symptoms tend to increase with lack of appropriate treatments; and

WHEREAS, According to a fact sheet provided by the National Fibromyalgia Association, 90% of physicians agree there is a need for more physician-oriented information, and 82% of physicians agree that Fibromyalgia is difficult to treat with the tools that are currently available; and use of complementary and alternative medicine is 2.5 times higher in Fibromyalgia patients; and

WHEREAS, The NIH reports that average direct costs above insurance, over a three-month period, added up to $951 per patient, which could be translated in a mean annual cost of $3,804; and

WHEREAS, Fibromyalgia patients are often misunderstood by the medical, business, and education communities, primarily due to the lack of teaching in medical schools about what is currently known regarding this potentially disabling illness; and

WHEREAS, Fibromyalgia patients often lose jobs, insurance, homes,

and spouses or significant others due to lack of awareness and understanding about the potentially devastating impact of Fibromyalgia; and

WHEREAS, Patients report that the optimal approach to treating Fibromyalgia is a Team of Physicians, with traditional and complementary therapists, tailoring the treatment for each individual patient; this can be accomplished best in an arrangement that facilitates communication between the patient and the Team; and

WHEREAS, The International Institute For Human Empowerment, Inc., a nonprofit charitable organization in the Capital District of New York, is dedicated to empowering all who face discrimination as a result of race, gender, socioeconomic status, age, disabilities, and lifestyle choices; and

WHEREAS, The International Institute For Human Empowerment, Inc., under the leadership of Sue Shipe, PhD, developed the Fibromyalgia Task Force of New York State to address inequities in the diagnosis and treatment of Fibromyalgia patients due to lack of education in medical schools and continuing education for Physicians; lack of understanding by society at large; lack of understanding and adequate accommodations by employers; and lack of legal protections due to the general lack of recognition of the devastating impact of this illness; and

WHEREAS, The Fibromyalgia Task Force of New York State serves patients across the State of New York, provides education and advocacy nationally, and shares information internationally; and

WHEREAS, The Fibromyalgia Task Force of New York State is developing a website for Physicians that will provide a comprehensive overview of Fibromyalgia research with implications for new treatments, information on Social Security Disability, and use of complementary therapies; and

WHEREAS, The Fibromyalgia Task Force of New York State recommends the formation of a statewide committee comprised of patients, researchers, physicians, legislators, business, education, complementary therapists, and others to address issues relevant to Fibromyalgia; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body recognizes the needs of those chronically ill people who suffer from Fibromyalgia, and urges all of our citizens to support the search for a cure and assist those families who deal with this devastating syndrome on a daily basis; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to memorialize Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim May 7-13, 2023, as Fibromyalgia Awareness Week in the State of New York; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to The Honorable Kathy Hochul, Governor of the State of New York; International Institute For Human Empowerment, Inc.; Intidyn; Albany Medical Center; New York State Department of Health; Medical Society of the State of New York; and SUNY at Albany Department of

Public Health.